

## Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 FBIE-00  
INSE-00 NSAE-00 INR-07 SCA-01 VO-03 SSO-00 INRE-00  
/036 W

-----251030 040921 /20

O R 250836Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6339  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 6667  
US MISSION GENEVA 364

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 1236

BANGKOK PASS SONGKHLA

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR, SREF, MY  
SUBJECT: WCRP VESSEL ACTIVITIES-ROLAND

REF: (A) BANGKOK 3666, (B) SINGAPORE 0685

1. SUMMARY. UNHCR OFFICIAL WILL BOARD ROLAND OFF MALACCA  
MORNING OF FEB 26 TO EXPLAIN TO 300 PLUS VIETNAMESE ON  
BOARD THAT IN ORDER TO FIND ASYLUM SHIP MUST RETURN TO  
MALAYSIAN EAST COAST (KUALA TRENGGANU) WHERE MANY WILL BE  
PROCESSED BY AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION TEAM. DCM AT  
AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION SAYS TEAM ARRIVING FEB 26, WILL  
SPEND 27-28 IN KUALA LUMPUR AND MARCH 2-5 IN TRENGGANU.  
UNHCR AND AUSTRALIAN HICOM BOTH STATE THAT, BECAUSE  
OF GOM RULING FOUR REFUGEES MUST LEAVE CAMP BEFORE THREE CAN BE  
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LANDED FROM ROLAND, IMMIGRATION TEAM WILL PROCESS  
BOAT REFUGEES FROM CAMPS FIRST THEN, WHEN  
SUFFICIENT BACKLOG IS BUILT UP, SOME WILL BE  
TAKEN FROM ROLAND. UNHCR OFFICIAL SAYS THAT THEY  
ANTICIPATE AUSTRALIANS WILL TAKE 180-190 AND THAT  
THESE WILL NOT LEAVE MALAYSIA BEFORE THIRD  
WEEK IN MARCH. HE EXPRESSED DISMAY AT NEWS

FROM SINGAPORE THAT LEAP DAL CURRENTLY OFF JOHORE  
AND THAT THUI THUOC HAS HOPES THAT THE APPROXIMATELY  
250 ON BOARD MIGHT BE LANDED IN MALAYSIA. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFFS HAD SERIES OF TELECONS TODAY WITH EMBASSY  
SINGAPORE, UNHCR KUALA LUMPUR AND THE AUSTRALIAN  
HIGH COMMISSION ABOUT THE ROLAND, WHICH IS CURRENTLY  
ANCHORED OFF MALACCA. UNHCR RESETTLEMENT OFFICER  
FRANCOIS FOUINAT SAYS HE WILL BOARD TOMORROW  
MORNING (FEB 26) TO EXPLAIN TO THE 300 PLUS REFUGEES  
ON BOARD THAT AUSTRALIA IS SENDING A TEAM OF  
IMMIGRATION OFFICERS THIS WEEKEND TO INTERVIEW  
REFUGEES IN TRENGGANU ON MALAYSIA'S EAST COAST.  
FOUINAT AND SAMPATKUMAR HOPE THAT THIS WILL ENABLE  
THE MASTER OF THE VESSEL TO SET A COURSE FOR  
TRENGGANU. AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION DCM  
HAS INFORMED US THAT THE IMMIGRATION TEAM WILL  
ARRIVE HERE SUNDAY NIGHT (FEB 27), SPEND MONDAY  
AND TUESDAY IN KUALA LUMPUR, AND WEDNESDAY THROUGH  
SATURDAY IN TRENGGANU (PRESUMABLY AT THE NEW CAMP  
AT PULAU BESAR). DCM EXPRESSED HOPE THAT FOUINAT  
WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL, ADDING THAT HE ANTICIPATED  
RADIO AUSTRALIA WOULD CARRY NEWS OF THE VISIT OF  
THE IMMIGRATION TEAM THIS EVENING THEREBY  
PROVIDING INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION TO THE SUSPICIOUS  
REFUGEES WHO APPARENTLY LISTEN CAREFULLY TO  
BROADCASTS FROM AUSTRALIA, THE BBC AND VOA.

3. ACCORDING TO THE DCM AND FOUINAT, IT WILL NOT  
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BE POSSIBLE TO TAKE ALL OF THE AUSTRALIAN  
CONTINGENT FROM THE ROLAND AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED.  
IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH GOM RULING THAT THREE  
REFUGEES MAY COME ASHORE FOR EVERY FOUR THAT ARE  
TAKEN BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES IT WILL BE NECESSARY  
TO TAKE BOAT REFUGEES FROM THE CAMPS FIRST IN ORDER  
TO BUILD UP A "CREDIT." AFTER A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER  
OF BOAT REFUGEES HAVE BEEN QUALIFIED, THEN UNHCR  
WILL ASK THAT A CONTINGENT BE PERMITTED TO LAND FROM  
THE ROLAND FOR SCREENING BY THE AUSTRALIANS. FOUINAT  
DESCRIBED TMO WHOLE PROCEDURE AS A "DIFFICULT GAME."  
AUSTRALIANS HAVE SAID THEY WOULD CHARTER A  
BOEING 707 TO CARRY APPROVED REFUGEES BACK TO  
AUSTRALIA AND FOUINAT ESTIMATES THIS MEANS THEY WILL  
TAKE BETWEEN 180 AND 190. HE DOES NOT THINK THE  
SCREENING AND PAPERWORK WILL BE COMPLETED BEFORE  
THE THIRD WEEK IN MARCH. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION,  
MFA OFFICER IN CHARGE OF INDOCHINA AFFAIRS TOLD  
EMBOFFS THAT DESPITE HARD LINE OF MALAYSIAN

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIALS (WHO IN EFFECT RUN GOM REFUGEE POLICY) HE IS HOPEFUL THEY WILL YIELD TO HIS ENTREATIES ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS TO ALLOW ALL THOSE ABOARD THE ROLAND TO RETURN TO SHORE. EMBOFFS SAID THIS WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL.

4. EMBOFF MENTIONED TO FOUINAT AND SAMPATKUMAR THAT HE HAD LEARNED FROM SINGAPORE THAT THE LEAP DAL WAS OFF JOHORE AND THAT THE OWNER, THAI PHUOC, WOULD BOAT IT TODAY. WHEN EMBOFF NOTED THAT PHUOC APPARENTLY HOPED TO LAND THE 250 REFUGEES FROM THAI CAMPS IN MALAYSIA, FOUINAT GROANED AND SAID "BUT THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE, THE MALAYSIAN GOVT WILL NEVER AGREE." HE WENT ON TO COMMENT THAT AS FAR AS UNHCR IS CONCERNED THE ROLAND HAS PRIORITY AND UNHCR WILL NOT EVEN CONSIDER THE PROBLEM OF THE LEAP DAL UNTIL THE ROLAND IS OUT OF THE WAY.  
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UNDERHILL

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 77 BANGKOK 3666, 77 SINGAPORE 685  
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**Review Markings:**  
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